

ROCKEFELLER

INTERNATIONALISM

Influenced by Zbigniew Brzezinski's concept, David Rockefeller pushed to set up the Trilateral Commission to win the advanced capitalist nations over to his liberal internationalist vision.

Part 5

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TRILATERALISM AND THE LEGACY OF DAVID ROCKEFELLER

One of David Rockefeller's more infamous and enduring achievements in service of the New World Order is his creation of the Trilateral Commission. According to David's somewhat sparse account in *Memoirs*, he embraced the trilateral idea in the early 1970s when he realised "that power relationships in the world had fundamentally changed". Although the USA was still the dominant superpower, its economic leadership was being eroded by a newly resurgent Japan and Western Europe. More worryingly, the previously friendly post-war relationship between the three regions had "deteriorated alarmingly", therefore, David observed, "something had to be done". His solution was, of course, to set up a "trilateral organization"—the Trilateral Commission—that would "bridge national differences and bring Japan into the international community".¹

There is, of course, far more to David's support for trilateralism and the foundation of the Trilateral Commission than his tale of intellectual self-discovery acknowledges. Besides downplaying his heavy reliance on Zbigniew Brzezinski's original trilateral concept, David fails to mention his key goals in forming the Commission. These included: establishing a new elite policy-planning organisation to supplement if not replace a Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), which David considered too fractured by the Vietnam War to be effective; reining in the Nixon Administration, which had taken advantage of Establishment divisions to reject the liberal internationalist program; and finally, encouraging unity among the industrialised powers as a temporary alternative to a United Nations (UN) increasingly dominated by radicalised Third World states, so that together they could achieve his goal of a "more integrated global political and economic structure".

Brzezinski's Trilateral Solution

It was Brzezinski, then a young upcoming professor at Columbia University, who had conceived the trilateral idea—first in the pages of the CIA-funded journal, *Encounter*, and subsequently in his book, *Between Two Ages: America in the Technetronic Era* (1970). Brzezinski had warned of a looming "serious crisis", as rapid technological change in the First World—which was creating a global "technetronic society"—widened the economic gap between it and the Third World. To prevent this inevitable "global fragmentation" from causing chaos, Brzezinski had called for the formation of a "community of developed nations" comprising "the Atlantic states, the more advanced European communist states and Japan". Arranged as a "council for global cooperation", this "community" would develop a "long-range strategy for international development based on the emerging global consciousness".²

This approach was necessary, according to Brzezinski, because of the obvious decline in America's superpower status. The United States "cannot shape the world single-handed", he argued; instead, America had to collaborate with other advanced countries in a "joint response" to ensure global stability. He advocated a two-stage program, with the US, Western Europe and Japan linking up in the first phase and the "advanced communist states" being included in the second. Displaying his liberal internationalist credentials, Brzezinski presented his envisaged "community of developed nations" as a "step toward greater unity" and a "realistic expression of our emerging global consciousness". Although "more ambitious than the concept of an Atlantic community...", it would be "less ambitious than the goal of world government, [but] more attainable".³

Between Two Ages proved influential from the outset. It received numerous positive reviews, and the Brookings Institution funded a program of "Tripartite Studies" to explore

the feasibility of the idea. Brzezinski also pushed his trilateral concept in a number of articles in the CFR's journal, *Foreign Affairs*, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's new periodical, *Foreign Policy*. These articles, which focused on building the first phase of his trilateral plan, were also noteworthy in that Brzezinski explicitly justified trilateralism as the correct response to the Nixon Administration's numerous excesses.

Brzezinski's criticisms of Nixon's foreign policy were threefold. Firstly, by "turning its back" on the Third World, Nixon was failing to deal with the "contagious threat of global anarchy", increasing the risk of "social and political fragmentation". Secondly, Nixon's recognition of China and *détente* with the USSR was having "a negative effect on American-European and American-Japanese relations", as well as creating splits among the capitalist countries which the Communist states might exploit. And thirdly, the "balance of power" approach favoured by Nixon was an "unrealistic and fundamentally untenable" strategy that offered "little leadership and historical direction".⁴ In fact, claimed Brzezinski, with international stability being challenged by "global anarchy", the Nixon Administration:

*...fails to seize the opportunity to postulate a larger community of the developed nations, spanning Japan, Western Europe and the United States, as the historically relevant response to that challenge.*⁵

Nixon's Nemesis

There can be little doubt that Brzezinski's attack on Nixon was attractive to David Rockefeller; for the plutocrat was already fast losing patience with the Nixon Administration, especially on economic matters. Nixon's "New Economic Policy" (NEP) of 1971, which had imposed wage and price controls and increased tariffs, had incensed David along with most of the Establishment. As David admits in *Memoirs*, he regarded the NEP as a "futile effort" to fight inflation, one that conflicted with his own inclination "to allow markets to have a freer rein".⁶ Consequently, he had sought an audience with Nixon to discuss the "international monetary and trade picture", presumably to set the wayward President on the correct course, but Nixon's Chief of Staff, H. R. Haldeman, blocked him. Eventually, David secured a meeting with Nixon's aide, John Ehrlichman, but his *démarche* was a failure; his views were dismissed by one of the officials at the meeting as "not especially innovative".⁷

This calculated rebuff made it all the more easy for Brzezinski to sell his trilateral concept directly to David. Both spent their summer holidays at Seal Harbor in the US State of Maine, and Brzezinski used the opportunity to discuss his scheme with the plutocrat.⁸

The impact of these discussions was evident in David's criticisms of Nixon's foreign policy, expressed in a private meeting in 1972 with presidential aspirant Jimmy Carter. As revealed in Roland Perry's book, *The Programming of the President* (1990), David hinted at having some reservations about the Nixon Administration, noting that despite Nixon "proving to be a good President" and he and Nelson having "a lot of time for Henry [Kissinger]", unfortunately "neither of them is a businessman, a banker..." David was concerned that their lack of economic sense was leaving the US vulnerable to Third World attempts to control the supply of key

commodities, especially oil. Furthermore, according to Perry, he was also worried that the Soviets and Chinese "might use *détente* as a front for expansion and the ultimate weakening of the capitalist nations".⁹ These arguments were pure Brzezinski.

David's other motivation in creating the Trilateral Commission was the declining effectiveness of the Council on Foreign Relations, much of it caused by an incendiary public debate over the Vietnam War. Although the Establishment's position had shifted to backing an immediate withdrawal—now that the war had been deemed too financially costly to continue¹⁰—the Council itself remained divided between supporters and opponents of the war. These divisions came to a head in 1970 when David, as the new CFR Chairman, attempted to appoint William Bundy, one of the architects of the conflict, as editor of *Foreign Affairs*. The appointment provoked outrage among those new CFR members, mostly academics, who opposed the war on moral grounds, some of them publicly branding Bundy a "war criminal". This upset Rockefeller, who considered Bundy to be a "man of quality and culture", but it was also clear to him that the war had "poisoned the atmosphere" at the Council.¹¹

The impact on Rockefeller of the battle over Bundy's appointment was profound. According to journalist John B. Judis, David "lost confidence that high-level policy discussions could be carried on at the Council on Foreign Relations", and to remedy this he "began to cast about for a new organization". Inspired by Brzezinski's call for "more informal three-way contacts" between the "social elites" of the three regions, David decided to establish a new policy-planning clique that would bring together the power-elites of the advanced capitalist countries.¹²

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Founding the Trilateral Commission

David launched his crusade in 1972. In March of that year, in speeches at Chase International Financial Forums, David proposed creating an "International Commission for Peace and Prosperity", comprising "leading private citizens" from Europe, North America and Japan who would devise solutions to the world's problems. The "problems of the future" which David identified reveal much about his broader global agenda: "reduction in world tensions; international trade and investment; environmental problems; control of crime and drugs; population control; and assistance to developing nations". David also took Brzezinski with him to that year's Bilderberg meeting in Knokke, Belgium, where he proposed including Japanese representatives at Bilderberg rather than forming a new organisation. His proposal received enthusiastic support from the conveniently present Brzezinski, but it was "shot down in flames", David claimed, by British MP Denis Healy.¹³

Undaunted, David moved to a more congenial environment, summoning various notables from the US, Western Europe and Japan to the Rockefeller family estate at Pocantico Hills in August 1972. Those at the meeting agreed with David that "something should be done"; and thus the Trilateral Commission was born, with Brzezinski nominated as its director. The Commission was publicly launched in July 1973—along with its magazine, *Dialogue*—as an organisation that would "formulate and propose policies" to achieve the Commission's goal of "closer cooperation among the three advanced regions". This event conveniently coincided with a

particularly strident *Foreign Affairs* article by Brzezinski, which insisted that "the active promotion of such trilateral cooperation must now become the central priority of US policy".¹⁴

With his new policy-planning organisation in hand, David paid a visit to Nixon's newly appointed Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, to inform him of the good news. No mention of this encounter can be found in Kissinger's massive three-volume memoirs; but at the Trilateral Commission's 25th anniversary dinner in 1998, he revealed what had transpired:

*In 1973, when I served as Secretary of State, David Rockefeller showed up in my office one day to tell me that he thought I needed a little help. I must confess, the thought was not self-evident to me at the moment. He proposed to form a group of Americans, Europeans and Japanese to look ahead into the future. And I asked him, "Who's going to run this for you, David?" He said, "Zbig Brzezinski..." I knew that Rockefeller meant it. He picked something that was important... When I thought about it there actually was a need.*¹⁵

If we pause to consider this encounter further, it tells us much about David's enormous power in the US political system. There are arguably few people in this world, especially those outside of government, who can stride into the US State Department and inform the incumbent Secretary of State that as their Administration's foreign policy has been found wanting, an organisation has been set up—to be headed by Brzezinski, one of the harshest critics of Nixon's foreign policy and long-time bitter rival of Kissinger—to "help" them take a proper course. Even fewer could expect to secure the immediate and unquestioning acquiescence of the Secretary of State, especially one with Kissinger's ego, who had earlier brazenly rejected demands from two Establishment delegations that US forces be withdrawn from Vietnam "immediately".¹⁶ Unless, of course, one is David Rockefeller.

Nevertheless, not being one to lose face willingly, especially before such a distinguished audience, Kissinger embellished his account, suggesting the purpose of David's visit was to seek his blessing for the trilateral venture—a blessing that he naturally, and modestly, gave: "And so I encouraged David to go ahead, though I deserve no credit whatever for the consequences..." But history does not quite bear Kissinger out, for he did not become Secretary of State until September 1973, by which time the Trilateral Commission was publicly up and running, rendering his blessing redundant. And even if we assume that the (then septuagenarian) manipulator's memory was faulty in his 1998 address, and that the meeting with David actually took place earlier in 1973 when he was still only Nixon's National Security Advisor, Kissinger's reputation fares no better.

If David's visit was indeed earlier in the year, it might explain Kissinger's "Year of Europe" speech, given in April 1973, which curiously drew heavily on the trilateralist concept. Identifying the need for "new types of cooperative action" to deal with a range of global problems, Kissinger called for a "new Atlantic Charter" involving Western Europe, the US, Canada and "ultimately Japan".¹⁷ But Kissinger's "Year of Europe" was a defective version

of trilateralism as it put Europe in a subordinate role to the US, sparking much anger in Europe. Consequently, many Trilateralists airily dismissed Kissinger's proposal, suggesting that it had "surface[ed] without any real prior consultation", "lack[ed] substance" (Brzezinski), and amounted to "an Administration attack on the European Community" (Schaezel).¹⁸ Irrespective of when the plutocrat's visit to Kissinger occurred, there can be no doubt that Kissinger's incompetent attempts to launch trilateralism would only have reinforced David Rockefeller's belief that the Nixon Administration "needed a little help".

That was 1973. By 1974, Nixon had resigned in disgrace and many of his key aides, including Haldeman and Ehrlichman, had been either dismissed or imprisoned. Only Kissinger, ever the opportunist and perhaps more acutely aware of the costs of defiance, remained in place, above the fray. The Trilateral Commission, meanwhile, went from strength to strength, holding the founding session of its Executive Committee in Tokyo in October 1973. In May 1975, the first plenary meeting of all of the Commission's regional groups—North America, Europe and Japan, comprising some 300 members—took place in Kyoto. In its Third

Annual Report, released in mid-1976, the Commission triumphantly noted that in the US "there was noticeably increased emphasis on trilateral ties as the cornerstone of American foreign policy".¹⁹

The "Broad Consensus"

The creation of the Trilateral Commission was an important triumph for David Rockefeller; for almost single-handedly he had established a new elite policy-planning organisation, one that expanded the boundaries of the existing elite political network to include Japan. But of immeasurably greater significance was the fact that the Trilateral

Commission was exclusively dedicated to David's vision of world order and to overcoming the divisions which afflicted the CFR. However, as he was to increasingly complain, David was dogged by allegations that the Commission was a "great conspiratorial body" which controlled the world and had "all sorts of evil designs for the rest of the planet", with him identified as the "cabalist-in-chief". Naturally, he dismissed these accusations as "foolish attacks on false issues", "absurd" and the product of "pure and simple ignorance". In truth, David insisted, the Commission was merely "a group of concerned citizens" interested in "fostering greater understanding and cooperation among international allies", and whose membership, he asserted in 1980, actually reflected a "broad range of political views".²⁰

Yet David's ridicule and claims of a "broad range of political views" flatly contradicted earlier statements by himself and other Trilateralists confirming the Trilateral Commission's ideological uniformity, especially its commitment to liberal internationalism. For example, the foreword to a collection of the Commission's Task Force reports, published in 1978, observed that despite some differences the "uniting element" in the Trilateral Commission was the "broad consensus" that "the cooperation of the three regions is necessary to assure smooth management of global interdependence". The foreword was co-signed by the European Chairman Georges Berthoin, by the Japanese Chairman Takeshi Watanabe, and by the North American Chairman David Rockefeller. Other members

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were more direct in identifying the globalist core of the Trilateral Commission's ideology. C. Fred Bergsten, for example, one of a number of officials who defected from the Nixon Administration to join the Commission, left no doubt, declaring that "Liberal internationalism is our creed".²¹

This "broad consensus" was that the US had no choice but to embrace trilateralism. With its economic power waning, David claimed, America was a superpower in decline and therefore unable to fulfil its global security commitments; however, growing global economic interdependence meant that it could not retreat into isolationism. David made this clear to the World Affairs Council in 1980:

*Today, whether we like it or not, the world including the United States has become truly interdependent... Gone are the days when America could be the military policeman of the world, the moral preacher of the world, the sole arsenal of democracy, or a patch of prosperity on the globe.*²²

However, as David had observed in 1975, the urgent task of managing an "interdependent world" could not be entrusted to the UN, as nationalist and anti-capitalist forces had captured it. Commenting on the profusion of UN committees established to examine the activities of multinational corporations, David detected an alarming "distrust of free enterprise and the free market economy". Noting the failure of this radicalised UN to create "a unified world polity", he concluded harshly that "the United Nations has largely reduced itself to a forum for the expression and promotion of narrow national or bloc interests rather than the broad human interests its charter proclaims". Those "broad human interests", he claimed, could only be served when "free market forces are able to transcend national boundaries".²³

The solution to these contrasting trends was obvious. In a speech to the Japan–America Society in 1979, David asserted that it was imperative that the US collaborate with the other capitalist powers to manage global affairs:

*Economically as well as politically, the US must exercise constructive leadership, recognizing that, today, we can neither dominate nor escape the global marketplace. Only in concert with other nations can we hope to achieve a freer, safer and more prosperous world that should be the goal of all nations and all people.*²⁴

It should come as no surprise that, contrary to David's claims of a "broad range of political views" but in tune with the "broad consensus", his logic was echoed by other leading figures in the organisation. Commission member and former Japanese Foreign Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, for example, explained at the Commission's 1980 meeting in London that since America had "lost its once dominant position", the only solution was for the trilateral countries to "cooperate amongst themselves to share the responsibility for maintaining a stable political order and for undertaking sound economic management..." While the Commission's North American Chairman Gerard C. Smith told the CFR in 1974 that since it was now "obvious" the UN "was not going to fulfil its promise as a universal organisation around which a universal structure could be formed", other approaches were necessary. Although "less ambitious" than

the UN, he explained, the "trilateral community...could well be a major factor in building a new world order."²⁵

The "broad consensus" was also reflected in the Commission's Task Force reports, the so-called "Triangle Papers", most of which seemed to recommend as a response to growing interdependence what we now call "global governance". For example, Triangle Paper No. 14, "Towards a Renovated International System", described the "world of separate nations" as "a mental universe which no longer exists", given that social, economic and political interdependence had "grown to an unprecedented scale". Its strategy for the "management of interdependence" involved "piecemeal functionalism", in which global solutions to international problems would be reached by approaching each one separately; and the decentralised management of the international system, with local administrations enforcing rules made at the global level.²⁶ Triangle Paper No. 11, "The Reform of International Institutions", recommended—to achieve the "overriding goal" of making "the world safe for interdependence"—the "checking of the intrusion of national governments into the international exchange of both economic and non-economic goods".²⁷

Get Carter!

By the mid-1970s, the Trilateral Commission's approach to world order had become, according to the Director of the CFR's "1980s Project", "the consensus position on foreign policy" in the USA (Ullman). Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford, made great efforts to conform to this consensus, appointing two Trilateral Commissioners to his cabinet: Secretary of Commerce Elliot Richardson and Secretary of Transportation William Coleman. Consultations between the Commission and the administration were also encouraged: in late 1975, the Commission's Executive Committee met with Ford; and in May 1976, Commission members also met

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with Kissinger, Richardson and Coleman.²⁸ David Rockefeller, however, found Ford's efforts wanting and he actively cultivated a replacement regime from within the ranks of the Democrats.

The alternative President soon emerged in the form of Jimmy Carter, Governor of Georgia. Carter seemed to be the ideal trilateralist candidate; he had been an enthusiastic member of the Trilateral Commission ever since David had personally invited him to join in 1973, attending all of its meetings. During the election campaign, Carter had publicly thanked the Commission for giving him a "splendid learning opportunity" and endorsed its basic precepts, pointedly rejecting Nixon's balance-of-power strategy. A running theme in Carter's campaign speeches was that "the time had come" to replace "balance-of-power politics with world order politics" and to "seek a partnership between North America, Western Europe and Japan..."²⁹

Assisted by Ford's politically self-destructive decisions to drop Nelson Rockefeller as his running mate and pardon Nixon over Watergate (annoying voters and the Establishment), Carter sailed into the White House in January 1977, ready to start a new era. Although confident of Carter's commitment to trilateralism, David Rockefeller did not let his new *protégé* in the White House completely off the leash and continued to provide direction. While only two meetings between Carter and Rockefeller at the White

House are recorded in Carter's official diary,³⁰ according to historian Robert Wood, "Carter's White House files are peppered with correspondence from David Rockefeller".³¹

Moreover, Carter had appointed 20 trilateralists to senior positions in his administration (Brzezinski became his National Security Advisor), effectively surrendering his administration to adherents of David's trilateralist ideology. With so many trilateralists in the White House as well as heading the Defense and State Departments and the Federal Reserve, David undoubtedly felt certain that there would be no repeat of Nixon's mischief-making.

Yet, despite its seemingly impeccable trilateralist pedigree, the Carter Administration did not remain in favour for long. In 1978, a new member of the Trilateral Commission took issue with Carter's new "human rights" policy of pressuring America's Third World allies to stop human rights violations. Speaking to the editor of *Trialogue*, this new trilateralist warned of "great dangers" in Carter's approach, including "producing revolutions in friendly countries". Instead, the US needed to practise "selectivity" in its international human rights policy and be more lenient towards "authoritarian regimes" (i.e., US client states), as they were more likely to evolve into democracies than were "totalitarian regimes" (i.e., Communist states). America's human rights policy, he said, "must maintain this crucial distinction".³²

The new member was Henry Kissinger, and his arguments struck a chord with David—who already had demonstrated a curious indifference to the atrocities carried out by the many dictators he had dealt with over the years. "I do believe," David said in 1979, "that repeated lecturing and public condemnation of regimes that we find repressive are not likely to produce the desired results."³³ Under Carter, he told the World Affairs Council, America's "vital interests" had been "subordinated to worthy but fuzzily defined moral issues—such as human rights and the proliferation of nuclear technologies". David insisted that while it was "only proper" for the US to press the cause of human rights, "it should be prudent since our interference may be capable of toppling regimes whose substitutes are unknown".³⁴

To be sure, Carter's actual record in promoting human rights was barely groundbreaking; in fact, it was marked by some major omissions, especially in the case of Cambodia—where his administration opted to support indirectly the genocidal Khmer Rouge.³⁵ Nevertheless, that David Rockefeller could publicly urge the Carter Administration to overlook human rights abuses by US allies and then be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Bill Clinton in 1998 for "fighting for human rights" is yet another of the many cruel hypocrisies of our times. (Kissinger received the same award from Gerald Ford in 1977.)

Clinton's description of David as "a genuine humanitarian of the likes our nation has rarely seen" also demonstrates the truth of Noam Chomsky's contention that a "culture of terrorism" pervades the US power-elite.³⁶ It is, after all, usually only the powerful that can celebrate and reward such blatant double standards.³⁷

There was more to David's growing impatience with the Carter

Administration: its foreign policy was also failing to meet his expectations, which was evident in the plutocrat's alarm at the "slippage of America's strength and leadership on the global scene".³⁸ The bitter disputes within the hapless President's foreign policy team, especially between fellow trilateralists Brzezinski and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, seemed to be producing an incoherent foreign policy. The Carter Administration, David claimed, had "often fallen short" in its explanation and execution of its foreign policy. In fact, he wrote that "Communication of policy has been confusing because policies have been conflicting"; and that Washington was "sending out signals that merely read zigzag, switch and somersault, but don't tell anybody what we're up to or what we may do next. Friends and foes alike find us unpredictable and undependable".³⁹

Another concern of David's was America's declining economic fortunes. The failure of Carter "to put our economic house in order" was proving damaging: "the international monetary system has been shaken and America's global leadership has been weakened". David also complained of a "regulatory rampage" emanating from Washington, that was reducing corporate profits and productivity.⁴⁰

Reagan and Beyond

David Rockefeller's wish for regime change was soon realised in 1980, when the Republican candidate Ronald Reagan secured a sizeable victory over Carter.

The role of the plutocrat in Carter's defeat is already well known. David, in collaboration with Henry Kissinger and former CFR Chairman John J. McCloy, had pressured Carter to admit the recently deposed Shah of Iran into the United States for medical treatment. This act precipitated the hostage crisis at the US Embassy in Tehran that was immensely damaging to Carter, although whether David anticipated that outcome is unknown. In *Memoirs*, David makes no secret of his motives, arguing that the Shah "deserved more honorable treatment from the most powerful nation on earth".⁴¹

Not surprisingly, David's name has come up in connection with the so-called "October Surprise" conspiracy, in which it is alleged that elements in the Reagan

campaign—notably future CIA Director William Casey—conspired to disrupt the Carter Administration's attempts to negotiate the pre-election release of the hostages, in the knowledge that an "October Surprise" would be a sure vote-winner for Carter.

There is little evidence of David Rockefeller's direct involvement, but one of his aides at Chase Manhattan is alleged to have spoken of such disruption plans in a meeting with Casey, and a "Rockefeller-connected lawyer" is said to have been involved in some dubious money transactions that facilitated the disruption exercise.⁴²

The Reagan Administration soon resolved many of the problems David had identified under Carter, even though many of its key members were suspicious of the Trilateral Commission. Reagan embraced Kissinger's "crucial distinction", giving strong support to anti-Communist dictatorships, especially in Central America, while adopting a belligerent posture against the Communist states.

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Economically, as David happily acknowledged in 1985, the Reagan Administration performed to his expectations:

*It is heartening that the current administration in Washington is dedicated...to encouraging the private sector and lessening the role of government.*⁴³

Through a combination of aggressive rhetoric and a defence build-up, Reagan also restored some sense of America's superpower status while still sidelining the United Nations. The only problem with Reagan, according to David, was that his electoral campaign had been critical of the Trilateral Commission. But this soon changed when "Reagan ultimately came to understand Trilateral's value and invited the entire membership to a reception at the White House in April 1984".⁴⁴

The limits of the Trilateral Commission's influence became more apparent during the first Bush Administration. There were relatively few trilateralists in the administration, especially at cabinet level—no more than six, according to some sources. George H. W. Bush had resigned from both the Commission and the CFR in 1978 on the grounds they were "too liberal". David Korten, however, suggests that Bush's commitment to the trilateralist agenda was evident in his support for global free trade and NAFTA—goals also supported by David Rockefeller. As for his foreign policy record, however, despite his Gulf War rhetoric about creating a "new world order", Bush arguably fell short of the liberal internationalist vision championed by the Commission and its founder. As one trilateralist later complained, contrary to Bush's "distinctly Wilsonian note of idealistic internationalism", *Desert Storm* was actually "dedicated...to preserving the sanctity of international boundaries...and the notion of national sovereignty". Also, by failing to live up to his rhetoric, Bush had given "the forces of isolationism an even greater opening" (Talbot).⁴⁵

The Clinton Administration, in contrast, which had a much higher trilateralist membership, showed considerably greater fealty to the Trilateral Commission's goals. Indeed, Clinton seemed to adopt the recommendations of Triangle Paper No. 41, "Global Cooperation After The Cold War" (1991)—co-authored by Joseph Nye, later Clinton's Assistant Secretary for Defense—as its foreign policy agenda. Arguing that in the post-Cold War world "the need for Trilateral cooperation in a wider global context is as great, perhaps greater than ever", the report proposed a 10-point agenda for "broad multilateral cooperation" to prevent the break-up of the world economy into "separate blocs". This agenda was subsequently reflected in Clinton's "enlargement" strategy, announced by his National Security Advisor, the trilateralist Anthony Lake, in 1993. Lake argued that the "major market democracies" must "act together" to prevent "economic disaster" by "updating international economic institutions" and "striking hard" for global free trade. Such pronouncements would have been music to the ears of David Rockefeller, and combined with Clinton's other globalist policies would explain David's reported efforts to protect Clinton from impeachment over the Lewinsky scandal in 1998.⁴⁶

Now, however, some 30 years after its foundation, with relations between the US and Europe dramatically eroded by the aggressive imperialist agenda of US President George W. Bush, the Trilateral Commission's effectiveness in promoting a coordinated policy by

the three regions appears in doubt. Splits have appeared; Trilateral Commission meetings in Washington and Prague in 2002 were reportedly marred by angry debates between US supporters and mostly European opponents of Bush's plans to invade Iraq.⁴⁷

With Bush seemingly prepared to sacrifice the trilateral relationship, David's modest assessment in *Memoirs* of the Trilateral Commission as an "invaluable forum for dialogue" and a "vigorous and effective collaborator on the world scene" now seems unduly optimistic.⁴⁸

It would be premature, however, to declare the Trilateral Commission to be finished. With the United States clearly overextended and losing control in Iraq, the opportunities for Bush's trilateralist opponents to retake the White House in 2004 have not completely disappeared—although, even if Bush is ousted, his administration's unilateralist course has set back the David Rockefeller trilateralist agenda of building a more unified global community for some years yet.

Under David Rockefeller's Shadow...

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In October 2002, after nearly 10 years of work, David Rockefeller finally released his autobiography, *Memoirs*. It was not a true autobiography in the sense of David personally writing it, but a group effort befitting a billionaire plutocrat. The project, overseen by the Rockefeller family historian Peter J. Johnson, employed during that period at least 15 other people who assisted in researching archives, transcribing interviews and constructing a chronology of David's life. According to a *New York Times* report, David "talked his memoirs out" and then edited the transcripts and subsequent drafts in a time-consuming process that "tested the patience and

diplomacy of all involved".⁴⁹

Reactions to *Memoirs* were wide-ranging. Many reviewers were impressed by David's account, praising the plutocrat as a "charming, low-key gentleman" (Frank), a "discreet and diplomatic banker" (Lenzner), and a "decent, hardworking man" (Auchinloss). There were a few dissenting opinions, with some reviewers expressing alarm at his "tone deafness—even eagerness—to do business with unsavoury regimes" (Stern), and observing that David seemed "coldly aloof from the horrors that his friends and contacts perpetrated", having spent "much of his career at Chase doing business with tyrants" (Brooks). One reviewer blasted *Memoirs* as "completely unrevealing", "soporific and self-important" and "not worth reading", noting that although an important figure warranting a book, David Rockefeller, a man of "mediocre intellect", was "obviously not the one to write it" (Schwarz).⁵⁰

However, with most reviewers of *Memoirs* indifferent to some of the more questionable aspects of David Rockefeller's life, this venture has been a public relations success for the now 87-year-old plutocrat. An image of David as a genial and well-intentioned globe-trotting philanthropist and banker has been successfully cultivated; we are even encouraged to find some humour in his apparent obliviousness to his great wealth and remarkable access to (and influence over) world leaders. For NWO researchers, however, although *Memoirs* provides some valuable clues and admissions, it is hardly a comprehensive source of information on David's lifetime of effort

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in building the New World Order. Indeed, as the preceding analysis of David's New World Order vision—drawing on other sources—has revealed, a different, less-benevolent assessment is warranted.

The differences between David's vision and that of Nelson are also instructive. While Nelson's vision was meandering and subject to the immediate counsel of his bevy of advisers and his overwhelming desire to reach the White House, David held fast to some core strategies—US leadership, trilateralism, economic integration and free trade—adjusting them as circumstances dictated. He also put to the most effective use the Rockefeller philanthropic empire, setting up a number of policy-planning cliques while taking leading roles in existing groups, giving him an unrivalled position to influence those in government.

David's strategy also reveals something fundamental about wealth and power: it does not matter how much money one has; unless it is employed to capture and control those organisations which produce the ideas and the policies that guide governments and the people who eventually serve in them, the

real power of a great fortune will never be realised.

It can be safely said that, in contrast to the marginal role of his brother Nelson, David's contribution to the New World Order has been substantial, even pivotal. He has not only been its Chief Architect, but also acted as its Chief Builder. While Nelson could only talk about the New World Order and that he would build it if he were President, David actually used his unelected, unaccountable yet powerful position to turn his words into government policy.

It is therefore fitting to conclude this examination of David Rockefeller's globalist vision with one of the unintentionally sinister attempts to celebrate the plutocrat's achievements. This was given by Carla Hills, who claimed at a panel discussion on *Memoirs* at Johns Hopkins University in late 2002 that the "richness and breadth" of David's "many contributions" to causes "that benefit all of us"⁵¹ was best captured in this famous quotation by 19th-century clergyman Edwin H. Chapin (1814–1880):

Not armies, not nations, have advanced the race; but here and there, in the course of ages, an individual has stood up and cast his shadow over the world.

Author's Note:

This series concludes next issue with Part Six, which examines the NWO contributions of the remaining Rockefeller brothers plus some members of the current generation and the ongoing role played by the Rockefeller network in promoting the liberal internationalist agenda.

About the Author:

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Endnotes

Due to space constraints, we are unable to publish the endnotes for Part Five of this series. However, we have posted them along with the article on the NEXUS website, <http://www.nexusmagazine.com>.

Readers who are unable to access the Internet can request a copy of the endnotes from any NEXUS office (see contact details on page 2).